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Winter 2013 Newsletter



HELPING HANDS
MONKEY HELPERS

Natalie with Koko

From the Executive Director: Megan Talbert

Dear Friends,

Happy Holidays from the staff and monkeys at Helping Hands!

I hope 2013 was as rewarding for you as it was for our team at The Monkey College. This is my favorite time of year as the staff and Board of Directors take time to reflect on our accomplishments and begin to set goals for the year ahead.

It's also the time of year that our mailbox is full of holiday cards from our recipients, foster families, and supporters across the country. We all love receiving your holiday greetings and appreciate your well wishes!

Can you believe that 2014 will mark the 35th anniversary of Helping Hands' first placement? Sadly, both Robert Foster and his monkey, Hellion have since passed away but they will forever be remembered as trailblazers, as they embarked on a long journey together and helped build the foundation on which we do our work today.

Next year will also mark the 10-year anniversary of the dedication of The Thomas and Agnes Carvel Foundation Center (known to our friends as The Monkey College). If you haven't seen our newest short film *The Monkey College*, please visit our website so you see how our dedicated

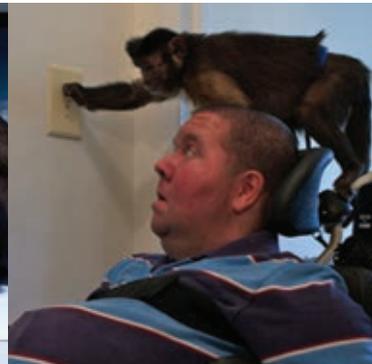
staff works together each day to accomplish our shared mission in this building.

I would like to take a moment to thank you, our supporters, for all the gifts you give us throughout the year. Whether it's a donation, purchasing an item from our wish list for the monkeys, attending an event, volunteering your time, or spreading the word about Helping Hands: Monkey Helpers among friends, family, and colleagues, your gifts allow us to change lives through the priceless partnerships we create between our service monkeys and their recipients.

Best wishes for a safe and happy Holiday Season and a bright start to 2014!

Warmest regards,

Megan



Recipient News: Cathi and Wendy



Rapidly approaching their one year anniversary together, we asked Cathi to share a little bit about her journey with Wendy.

Tell us a little about yourself.

I was always an active person – I never had time to stop and smell the roses. In May of 1995 my world turned upside down. I was on my way home from work when a driver crossed the yellow line and hit my car head on. I woke up in the hospital in July. Since then, I have spent my time trying to help people who may be in a similar situation. I do a lot of volunteer work and am the chair of the local chapter of the National Spinal Cord Injury Association (NSCIA) and I am a certified mentor through the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation.

How did you hear about Helping Hands?

I had always wanted a service monkey, but never really looked into it. (I actually thought they didn't exist.) Through my work with the NSCIA, I received an email from Helping Hands about a presentation opportunity. I visited your website and for the first time, seriously considered a service monkey. I filled out the application, made some videos, and sent in my references. The process was in depth, but not too hard. I was worried because when I picked my references, I picked the people who knew me the best, rather than friends or family who would just say nice things about me. I think that helped the process. Six months later I was paired with Wendy! The staff at Helping Hands really know what they are doing in matching personalities, because we are a perfect match. When they came for the placement week I was a little nervous, but they put my mind at



ease right away.

What is it like, living with Wendy?

I had never had a routine. Before my accident, I worked all the time. After the accident, I never had any responsibility and never had to keep a schedule. I did not have a purpose. She gives me purpose – she has a schedule and so I have a schedule. She makes me more responsible about my time and I find that she is teaching me about myself. She depends on me. I never thought of anyone depending on me before – I never had kids and I tend to be a loner. Wendy makes me look at the world differently and gives me a new outlook – I know that we need each other; That she can count on me and I can count on her. The more trust we have in each other, the more it builds. Like anyone, I have my good days and I have my bad days. Wendy sees both and she doesn't

“Like anyone, I have my good days and I have my bad days. Wendy sees both and she doesn't care – she is just happy that I am here and that she knows she is loved.”

care – she is just happy that I am here and that she knows she is loved. We are getting to know each other more deeply every day, and I am happier every day. I think she has made me a better person.

Was there anything that surprised you?

Wendy is not like a cat or a dog. She has complex feelings and she is helping me to understand how she is feeling which, in turn, helps me in my interactions with other people. It really makes me stop and think about how I act with others. I started a journal so that I can look back on everything we have accomplished together.

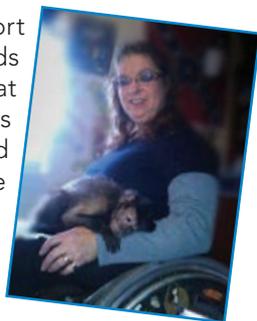
She is hilarious when I have friends over she makes a big fuss over me and a big show of ignoring them!

Is there anything you would like to tell us?

If you are thinking about applying to the program, the best advice I can give you is ASK QUESTIONS. There is no such thing as a dumb question. Always say what is on your mind – this is an amazing and unique relationship. I didn't know what to expect, but it was all well worth it. I want Wendy to be as happy and healthy as possible.

I want to say thank you so much to

those who support Helping Hands. Words cannot describe what having Wendy does for me and it would not be possible without you. I could never afford to get a service animal, but because of you, she is provided to me for free. She makes my life so much more meaningful. I have purpose again. I feel that the more we work together, the more I can help other people. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.



Staff Spotlight: Marie



Since she was a child, Marie (Waitkevich) Gordon knew she wanted to work with injured and orphaned wildlife. She first got to know about Helping Hands in the late 90s, while she was working

at the animal hospital responsible for the care of our service monkeys. She was intrigued by the unique organization and the medical and nursing care the hospital provided the monkeys. In 2000, she cared for her first monkey patient at home and provided her the nursing treatments she needed. (That monkey has since been placed for several years and is doing great!)

Marie officially joined the staff in 2004, and is now the Associate of Healthcare. Marie oversees all the medical needs of our monkeys, both in Boston and across the country. She is very proud of the high standard of care that Helping Hands provides to all our service monkeys—whether they are in our facility or living

elsewhere under our care. (Because the health of our monkey helpers is so important, Helping Hands provides financial support for ongoing veterinary care when needed.)

When asked about her time with Helping Hands, Marie told us: "Helping Hands monkeys and humans are like family to me and I have forged lasting, meaningful relationships with so many. As a former teacher and Wildlife Rehabilitator I enjoy being able to use my talents to teach people monkey medicine and behavior. I have many memories of monkeys, recipients and the wonderful foster families and staff I work with.

I would like to thank donors for providing us with funds to change people's lives. I hear frequently how a Helping Hands monkey has not only changed - but saved a recipient's life. I would like to compliment all our volunteer foster families on the wonderful and important job they do caring for our monkeys on a daily basis. I know the sacrifices they make, the time they invest, and the rewards everyone receives from their gifts."



Your Gift Makes A Difference!

It is not inexpensive to raise, provide care for, place, and support one monkey helper. On average it comes with a price tag of \$40,000 – but the impact is truly priceless. We need your continued support so that together, we can transform lives. Often, we get asked: “How can I help?” So, we have put together a list of ideas:

- **Make a one-time donation** (cash or stock).
- **Consider becoming a monthly Sustaining Donor.**
- **Donate your car, boat, truck, RV, jet ski or snowmobile** and receive a tax deduction through www.donationline.com.
- **Buy merchandise** – Order from our Café Press store, from our website, or from www.monkeyhugs.org.
- **Online** – Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible Amazon purchases to Helping Hands whenever you shop on www.smile.amazon.com. Also, every search and purchase you make on www.goodsearch.com generates a donation to Helping Hands.
- **Buy an item from our Wish List** – Caring for all our monkeys at The Monkey College is a big job, and there are some supplies that we can never have enough of.
- **Join us at Special Events or Behind the Scenes Tours** – Saturday, October 25, 2014 is the *Monkey Helpers' Annual Food Festivale*, our largest event of the year in Boston. Our website has dates for upcoming tours.
- **Donate an item or bid** during our annual online auction - no matter where you are, everyone can participate!
- **Spread the word** – Like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, or share an eCard from our website with friends and family.

Visit our website, www.monkeyhelpers.org/support-us and see all the ways you can help. Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of how you can join us in making more stories like Cathi's possible.

Meet a Monkey: Ashley

Ashley is an extremely intelligent and curious little monkey. These attributes have gotten her far in her school years as she is eager to learn and picks up new tasks easily. Her motivation for peanut butter doesn't hurt either! Ashley is gentle and sweet and makes friends with both people and other monkeys quickly. She loves spending quiet time grooming her trainer's hair and toes, and standing under warm running water during bath time. Ashley's favorite toys allow her to interact and manipulate buttons and levers, and she loves to have a small plastic bowl or plate to eat her chow off of. When she has oatmeal, she uses a spoon or a stick to get each and every piece out of the bowl, demonstrating her clever use of tools. Ashley will make a great companion to someone soon.

